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Does U. S. Stake Security on H-Bomb?

WASHINGTON.—A serious issue implicit in President Truman's announcement on January 31 that he had ordered the Atomic Energy Commission to continue its development of the hydrogen bomb is whether this new weapon, if completed, will implement or dominate the foreign policy of the United States. In his annual report, published on January 30, Secretary of Defense Louis C. Johnson said, "Until the United Nations has attained the stature and the moral and physical sanctions with which to deal with aggression, it is imperative that we maintain a strong military establishment and make it plain to the world that our will for peace is reinforced by power." The use of such power, enhanced by the hydrogen bomb, to renew the active search for peace through negotiation and continuance of economic and social rehabilitation programs abroad might be fruitful. But its use as a battlement—as though the bomb were some kind of Maginot Line—behind which the United States can safeguard itself without at the same time working for world stability by nonmilitary programs, could prove disastrous.

Military Power Secondary

Weapons and military power will always remain a secondary factor in the long-range search for national security and world stability. In the first place, the effectiveness and usefulness of any single weapon are unpredictable. During the four years of the American monopoly of the atomic bomb, military men and scientists never agreed about the bomb's strategic value. For a while, some considered the

bomb the "absolute weapon" and therefore, as Harrison Brown, prominent atomic scientist, put it, "atomic bomb offensives, because of their tremendously effective and at the same time inexpensive nature, will tend to make all other forms of warfare obsolete." On the other hand, Dr. Vannevar Bush, former chairman of the Research and Development Board in the Department of Defense, wrote in *Arms and Free Men* that atomic bomb attacks would probably not decide the outcome of wars.

The hydrogen bomb does not yet exist, and no one can be certain that its manufacture would not outmode a great deal of current American military equipment. Is the largest American plane, the B-36, big enough to deliver a hydrogen bomb? So far as knowledge available to the public is concerned, neither the Navy nor the Air Force has improved the guided missile to the point where it could substitute for a plane in delivering either a hydrogen charge or an atomic charge over the distances which probably would separate bases from targets in the event of another war.

In the second place, whatever weapon one nation perfects can also be perfected by rival nations. The power advantage over the Soviet Union which the atomic bomb gave to the United States lasted only from August 1945, when the Army Air Force dropped such a bomb on Hiroshima, until September 1949, when President Truman announced that Russia had set off an atomic explosion. The physicists and engineers available to the Soviet Union could probably also break an

American monopoly in hydrogen bombs. Thus experimentation with other weapons and many kinds of matériel, especially submarines and guided missiles, characterizes the arms race. The Weapons Evaluation Group of the Defense Department is busy measuring the relative worth of a great range of new and modified armaments. The policy of the Defense Department seems to be to divide its funds for research among all possible avenues of inquiry instead of devoting large sums to the perfection of a few arms. This policy is apparently based on the assumption that it would be dangerous to decide in time of peace that the country would be best secured in time of war by the development of some weapons and the neglect of others. But the ability of enemies to match each other's weapons extends to armaments of lesser, destructive power than the modern bombs.

Weapons and Foreign Policy

The President's announcement about the hydrogen bomb both excites and discourages the interest of many Americans in international cooperation. Perhaps because Mr. Truman regards the bomb as an instrument of power, he has declined to seek a new international agreement in the United Nations for the control of explosive weapons capable of mass destruction. The tendency of the United States to contemplate super-bomb isolationism even in negotiations with our closest allies is also demonstrated by Congressional opposition to the desire of the President and the State Department to share with Britain more of the knowledge than the latter

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now has about the manufacture of atomic bombs.

This opposition has been fortified by the arrest in England on February 3 of Dr. Klaus Emil Julius Fuchs, Senior Principal Scientific Officer in the Ministry of Supply, which controls all British atomic research. The fear that even friendly nations may have persons inimical to the United States in responsible posts encourages isolationism here.

On the other hand, the theoretically destructive powers of the hydrogen bomb have awakened the interest of many people

in launching a new search for peace through the broadest possible international cooperation. Warning that the Soviet Union would soon be working on a hydrogen bomb, Senator Brien McMahon, Democrat of Connecticut, chairman of the Congressional Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, on February 2 urged the Administration to make a new approach to Moscow for an agreement to neutralize the super-weapons. As a basis for an overture, the Senator suggested that the United States offer a super-Marshall Plan of \$50 billion.

While the Senate has not otherwise shown a disposition to appropriate such a large amount, Chairman Tom Connally of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has already recommended new negotiations in the UN, and Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Republican of Michigan, ranking minority member of Connally's committee, on February 1 asked President Truman to proclaim that the United States would "suspend all our activities in respect to mass destruction the first moment these weapons can be dependably outlawed."

BLAIR BOLLES

Secrecy on Defense Weakens Civic Responsibility

As tension mounts over the realization that the world, but lately threatened with atomization, is now in danger of even more frightening destruction, every responsible person faces soul-searching questions. What is the best course for one's country, and for mankind—and are the two identical or separable? Recognizing that the world is far from being at peace, does the accumulation of more and more destructive weapons offer security on at least a national basis—even though it is known that our potential opponent is capable of matching our efforts?

Or must we accept as the most hopeful summation of the present crisis the statement of Senator Brien McMahon, when he told the Senate on February 2: "Let me warn, with all the solemnity at my command, that building hydrogen bombs does not promise positive security for the United States; it only promises the negative result of averting, for a few months or years . . . an attack that might incinerate 50 million Americans—not in the space of an evening but in the space of minutes?"

Tentative Answers

To these and related questions each will reply according to his conscience and best judgment. Some tentative attempts to formulate answers have already been made. Europeans, according to press reports, accept the development of the hydrogen bomb in a fatalistic spirit, expressing relief only that the United States, not Russia, seems to be the first to have the new weapon (although this is not a certainty), but think a fresh attempt should be made to restudy the problem of international control of weapons. Such restudy is urged by General Romulo of the Philippines, president of the last

United Nations General Assembly, and by the Federation of American Scientists. Senator Millard E. Tydings, Democrat of Maryland, chairman of the Senate's Armed Services Committee, appealed to President Truman on February 6 to call a world conference for disarmament, in conventional as well as atomic weapons, to "end the world's nightmare of fear." From United Nations circles came the suggestion that, while international control of weapons was being studied, a temporary agreement should be concluded prohibiting the use, but not the manufacture, of atomic and hydrogen bombs.

Dangers of Secrecy

Meanwhile, the arrest in London of Dr. Klaus Fuchs, who as a member of an official British scientific mission had worked at Los Alamos during the war, revealed the difficulties of maintaining ironclad security regulations even in time of "hot," let alone "cold," war. Such security, it becomes increasingly apparent, can be enforced only if the American people are willing to accept regulations which will materially modify basic freedoms of inquiry and communication. The experience of other countries shows that the expansion of armaments, which always invites spying by the intelligence services of competitor nations, brings with it the constant expansion of areas of thought and action where secrecy is deemed essential for security reasons. The need for secrecy is then invoked to justify the imposition of restrictions that have been regarded here in the past as repugnant to democratic concepts and practices.

Surprise has been expressed in Washington at the seeming apathy of the American public concerning the hydrogen bomb. Yet this apathy is not surprising.

Quite apart from the dulling effect of repeated warnings of catastrophe in the wake of Hiroshima, the secrecy surrounding top policy decisions which has now become customary gives even well-informed and civic-minded individuals a sense of fatalism which paralyzes the sense of personal responsibility.

What Is Security?

Two basic problems we face today as a nation are: 1) What is security? and 2) What use shall we make of our new weapons—whether the A-bomb or the H-bomb or others as yet unrevealed?

Except for convinced pacifists who reject all use of force, most people who witnessed German conquest in Europe or Japanese conquest in Asia and now fear Russian aggression would argue that weapons are necessary to ward off military defeat, and point to France's plight in 1940 as a dire example. It is certainly arguable that if France had had proper equipment and, going further back, had developed modern industries to provide modern armaments, it could have more effectively resisted the German invasion. But it must not be forgotten that the will to resist had eroded in France, and that thousands of Frenchmen were actually opposed to resistance, either because they looked to Germany as a bulwark against "communism" (a phrase then used to describe all social change) or because, being Communists, they viewed the war between France and Germany as a war between two "imperialisms." France had actually been defeated before the Germans struck a blow, and the anticipated security of the Maginot Line proved a tragic illusion.

At this critical juncture, it is essential for us not to fall into a comparable illu-

sion and believe that some of the areas where we have hoped to draw a line against Russia and communism—from France to Indo-China—will hold fast even if we can offer them the safeguard of the H-bomb unless they have been fundamentally stabilized by such measures as the Marshall Plan in Europe and Point Four in Asia. The rapid change in the Asian balance of power has given the world something of the same shock as that which many experienced in 1940, when the Germans by-passed the Maginot Line. Although the West has lost by the end of the colonial system—which was brought about by many factors in addition to Russia and communism—this does not necessarily mean a lasting gain for Russia. As the peoples of Asia acquire a greater measure of independence, they may make choices of their own—as India, for example, is trying to do—which will prove favorable neither to Russia nor to the West. It is doubtful that our possession of the H-bomb will of itself determine these choices. Far more important, as Washington has recognized, is such aid as may be given to strengthen the economic and social structure of underdeveloped areas. It is clear, however, that the stepped-up tempo of changes in Asia requires com-

parable stepping-up in the tempo of aid, which has hitherto been very modest as compared with aid to Europe.

What To Do With H-Bomb?

But assuming that in the areas under our direct political control we do possess the nonmilitary elements of security, what shall we do with the H-bomb? Shall we stockpile it, as we have done with the uranium bomb, in the hope of thereby deterring resort to aggression by Russia? Shall we use it immediately against Moscow, as suggested by some, before the Russians have developed this new weapon, even at the risk of retaliation? Or shall we look on all weapons not as an end in themselves, but as a means of achieving the objectives of our national foreign policy which, Washington has repeatedly stated, is now irrevocably based on the United Nations?

If we are to use the H-bomb and other weapons as instruments of policy, it becomes essential again to define our foreign policy objectives. If our main purpose is to destroy the Stalin regime, then war may be the only indicated course, and a good argument can be made for waging war now rather than prolonging the current period of tension which might relatively

strengthen Russia and weaken the United States. No one, not even the most vocal supporter of the "let's-drop-bombs-on-Russia" school, can promise easy victory, or even victory itself; and many, including our Navy spokesmen, have predicted that a war waged with air-power implemented by atomic or other bombs would end in universal disaster.

But if our main purpose is to discover ways and means of avoiding ultimate catastrophe for the world in which, even as victors, we would have to live, the continuance of negotiations, no matter how toilsome and irksome, cannot be rejected; nor must it be confused with "loss of face" or "appeasement." Because of the appeal we can justifiably make to moral principles, because of our past efforts to maintain and expand freedom, and because of our present technological superiority, this country retains the initiative. It will lose this initiative only if we surrender to the defeatist attitude that human intelligence and skill are unequal to the tasks posed by political and scientific problems which have been created in the first place by human beings, and that secrecy, which ultimately atrophies the mind and will, is our only genuine safeguard.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

Visible Signs Point to Close British Election

The most common prediction by observers venturesome enough to offer one is that Labor will win the British general election on February 23 but will see its present majority in the House of Commons reduced. The Labor party appears to be favored for several reasons: for its unbroken string of by-election victories; because Britain's recurrent economic crisis has manifested itself in continuing austerity rather than catastrophic mass unemployment; and because evidence is lacking that the political pendulum has swung very far to the right since the 1945 election. Other evidence, however, can be interpreted to predict a Conservative return to office by a relatively narrow majority. The only certain thing about the coming contest appears to be that it will be fairly close.

By-Election Record

In 1945 the Labor party polled 11,992,292 votes and won 393 of the 640 seats in the House of Commons. The Conservatives and their close allies rolled up 9,950,809 votes and captured 213 seats. The

Liberal party's 2,239,668 votes netted only 12 seats; and splinter parties won another 22 seats. Labor's 2-million-vote lead over the Conservatives therefore was translated into a handsome majority of 146 seats over all other parties in the House of Commons. Britain's electoral system, like that of the United States, squeezes out third parties and tends to give the party with the largest popular vote an exaggerated control of the legislature.

Since 1945 every straw in the political wind has been carefully watched by the government and opposition alike. Fifty-two by-elections—to choose M.P.'s for seats that fell vacant through death, resignation and so forth—have occurred in that period. Thirty-four of them were in constituencies won by Labor candidates in 1945, and the government has not lost a single one of these seats—an unparalleled record in modern British history.

A more careful scrutiny of by-election statistics, however, may also be used to predict a Conservative victory. A large proportion of the Labor seats that fell vacant were ones in which the party had

sizeable majorities in 1945. It has been common since 1947 for the Labor by-election majorities to be reduced, with the Conservative vote increasing by 6 to 7 per cent. If this trend were carried through in the general election, the Conservatives could be expected to pick up enough seats in constituencies where Labor's 1945 margin of victory was narrow to attain a working majority in Parliament. But there is no certainty that such a trend will develop. Both parties turned the by-election in South Hammersmith in February 1949 into a miniature national trial of strength because the constituency had been won by Labor in 1945 by a lead of only 3,400 votes. The government candidate won the by-election, and although his majority was cut to a little over 1,500 votes, the Conservative rate of gain was also cut. In elections, as in horse races, winning by a nose is as good as crossing the line ten lengths ahead of the opposition—a fact which consoles Labor supporters. Conservatives, on the other hand, can reasonably hope that government candidates will not be so fortunate in all the

close contests. Moreover, recent redistribution of the electoral districts—which reduces the size of Commons from 640 to 625 seats—will increase the number of evenly balanced constituencies and is a factor slightly favorable to the Tories.

Poll Pointers

The data revealed by British public opinion polls also indicate a tight race without providing a decisive index to the winner. The Labor party, which polled 48 per cent of the total vote in 1945, has declined in popularity during the trials of governing post-war Britain, reaching what was probably its low point—approved by less than 40 per cent of the persons questioned—toward the end of 1947. The Conservatives, who received approximately 40 per cent of the vote in the last election, reached a peak of 48 per cent preference in November 1949 polls. More recent samplings show Labor slowly gaining and the Conservatives falling off. Moreover, the undecided portion of the electorate, as indicated by the polls, is over 10 per cent. It is expected that a good many of these “don’t-knows” will make up their minds in the heat of the campaign. And, of course, American experience in 1948 has revealed the need for allowing at least a 4-per-cent margin of error for the pollsters.

Other “trends” often cited—recent Labor defeats in Australia and New Zealand, for instance—are even more risky as a basis of prediction. The great Conservative gains in the municipal and county elections of the spring of 1948 and 1949 are widely discounted because they were fought with only 40 to 50 per cent of the electorate voting. British general elections, and by-elections as well, bring out 70 to 80 per cent of the eligible voters.

Although the signs point to a photo-finish, there is little real probability that the ultimate results will be a dead heat in which some minority party, notably the Liberals, will hold the balance of power in Commons and thus bring about a coalition government. It is more likely that even a narrow division of the popular vote will give either Labor or the Conservatives a legislative majority of something like one hundred seats.

While the statistical indicators are

Branches and Affiliates

*BUFFALO, February 11, *China, Communism and the Far East*, Robert Aura Smith

*CLEVELAND, February 13, *The U.S. Looks at the British Elections*, Robert Cass, Thomas R. Guthrie, Donald Barnes, Shepherd L. Witman

BUFFALO, February 16, *What Should U.S. Policy Be in the Far East*, Julius W. Pratt, Carlton F. Scofield, Alexander Janta, Manly Fleischmann

MILWAUKEE, February 16, *The French Attitude Toward the Integration of Germany into Western Europe*, M. J. J. Viala

*MINNEAPOLIS, February 17-19, *Far East Institute*, A. T. Steele, Livingston T. Merchant, His Excellency U. So Nyun

OKLAHOMA CITY, February 20, *The Pattern of Russian Expansion*, John Scott

UTICA, February 20, *Resolved: That the United States Should Send an Ambassador to Spain*, Students of Colgate U. & Hamilton College

*CLEVELAND, February 21, *Newton D. Baker Memorial Lecture*, Walter Lippmann

POUGHKEEPSIE, February 21, *U.S. Resources for Peace or for War*, Col. Herman Beukema

BUFFALO, February 23, *United States of Europe and United States of America*, Paul Emile Naggier

NEW ORLEANS, February 23, *What to Expect in Europe*, John Scott

WORCESTER, February 23, *Point Four—The Prospects for Africa*, Lt. Col. The Honorable H. A. C. Howard

SHREVEPORT, February 24, *The Pattern of Russian Expansion*, John Scott

*Data taken from printed announcement.

closely watched, the actual battle for the “floating vote” of two or three million that traditionally decides British elections is centered around subjective assessments of the political scene. Labor, of course, has the backing of the trade unions, but its victory in 1945 is also attributed to the fact that it picked up a substantial portion of the middle class vote. During its term in office rationing, taxation and many other aspects of British austerity have borne harder on the middle class than on the working class. Another open question is how the housewife will vote. The polls indicate that the trend away from Labor has been greater among women than among men, and the general explanation for this is the difficulty of setting the British dinner table.

Perhaps the biggest open question of all is the progress and nature of the campaign itself. Electioneering only began in earnest on February 3 when the King dissolved Parliament, and British campaigns have a way of turning up one hotly debated, although sometimes slightly irrelevant, issue to which success or fail-

News in the Making

EUROPEAN “INTEGRATION” STALLED: When Paul G. Hoffmann, ECA Administrator, seeks \$3.1 billion to finance the Marshall Plan in 1950-51, he must convince Congressmen that progress has been made toward European “integration.” His task was not facilitated by the actions of the OEEC in Paris last week. A proposed currency clearing union was sidetracked, and the further elimination of import quotas was also postponed.

OIL AND DOLLARS: That Anglo-American differences over the British dollar oil problem are far from compromise became clear when Secretary of State Dean Acheson, on February 1, said the United States could not accept Britain’s proposed embargo (effective February 15) on imports of American-produced fuel oil to the sterling area. Britain’s determination to stop this leakage of dollars has brought protests from United States distributors and Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who denounced the proposed action, since the United States “has made and is making stupendous gifts to Britain to rebuild its economy.”

INCREASE IN OIL TARIFF?: Two bills are currently before the House which would limit oil imports to 5 per cent of current consumption and raise the tariff from 10.5 cent a barrel to \$1.05—measures which, it is estimated, would cut imports of Venezuelan oil, the major interest affected, to less than half the present amount. A similar bill pushed by independent oil enterprises failed of passage last year by only one vote.

Winston Churchill’s charge in 1945 that a Labor government would lead to the establishment of a British Gestapo was such an issue. The Leader of the Opposition has so far shown caution in the current campaign; fortunately for the Conservatives, Labor also has its fiery orators who may slip into some extravagance which will offend the British sense of fair play.

WILLIAM W. WADE

(The last of three articles on prospects for the British general election.)

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